

THE BON AIR COMMUNITY PLAN

Adopted By The Chesterfield County
Board of Supervisors
April 9, 1986

Prepared by
Chesterfield County Planning Department

Reformatted October 2006

Preface

The **Bon Air Community Plan** was prepared by Planning staff in November 1985 and adopted by the Board of Supervisors on April 9, 1986. The draft plan presented to the Board for action included sections on "Land Use Alternatives," "Impact Assessment" and "Alternative Selection." In preparing the plan for final distribution, staff deleted the aforementioned sections for clarity sake. In their place, a discussion of the adopted Land Use Plan was inserted.

Thus, this document contains background information on conditions as they existed in Fall, 1985, a description and brief discussion of the adopted Land Use Plan and the adopted Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Actions.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Citizens of Chesterfield County

Introduction

In accordance with policy guidelines stated in **General Plan 2000**, the Bon Air Plan looks in depth at the Bon Air community in order to plan for its future. Upon adoption by the Board of

Supervisors, the Bon Air Plan becomes an amendment to the **General Plan 2000** and, as such, will be used to facilitate land use, transportation and public facility decision making.

A four-step planning process has been used to achieve a final plan: data collection and analysis; development of land use alternatives and an assessment of each alternative's impact on the community; alternative selection; and recommendations for actions necessary to successfully implement community goals and objectives.

Identifiable natural and manmade boundaries are typically used to delineate areas of concentrated study. In this case, the boundaries are the Richmond City boundary running east/west along Huguenot Road, the City boundary running north/south along the power lines, the Southern Railway lines to the south and the Jimmy Winters Creek in the west. (See Map 1).

COMMUNITY CHARACTER: PAST AND PRESENT

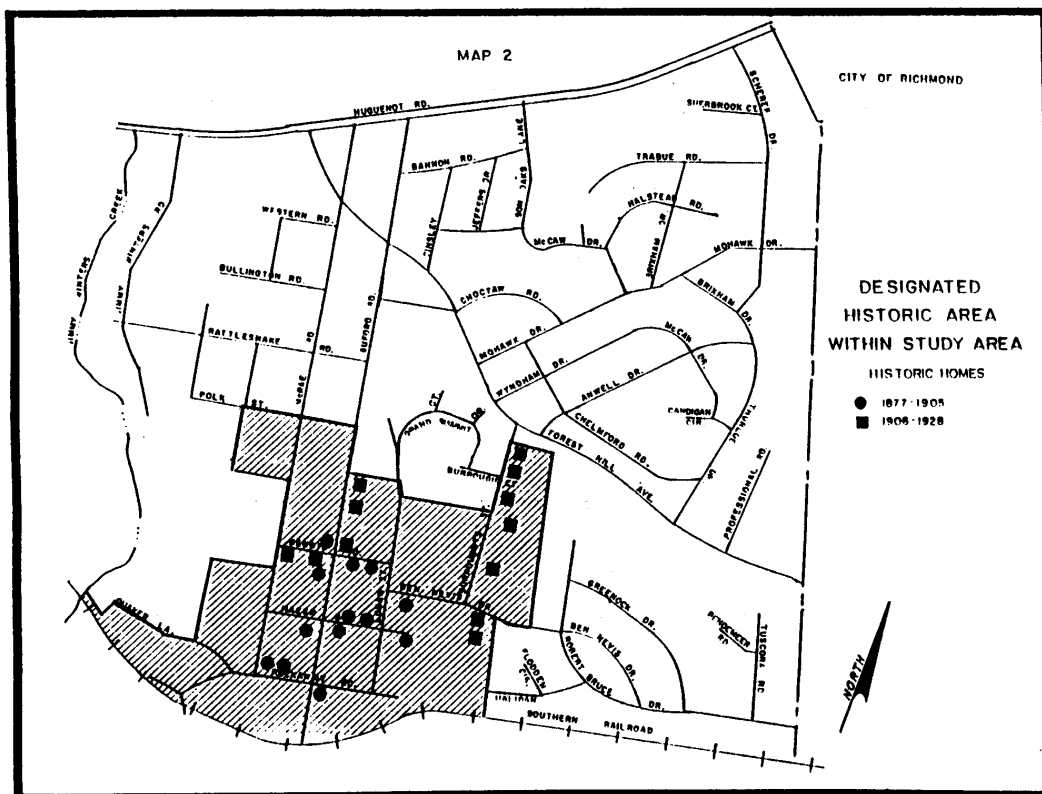
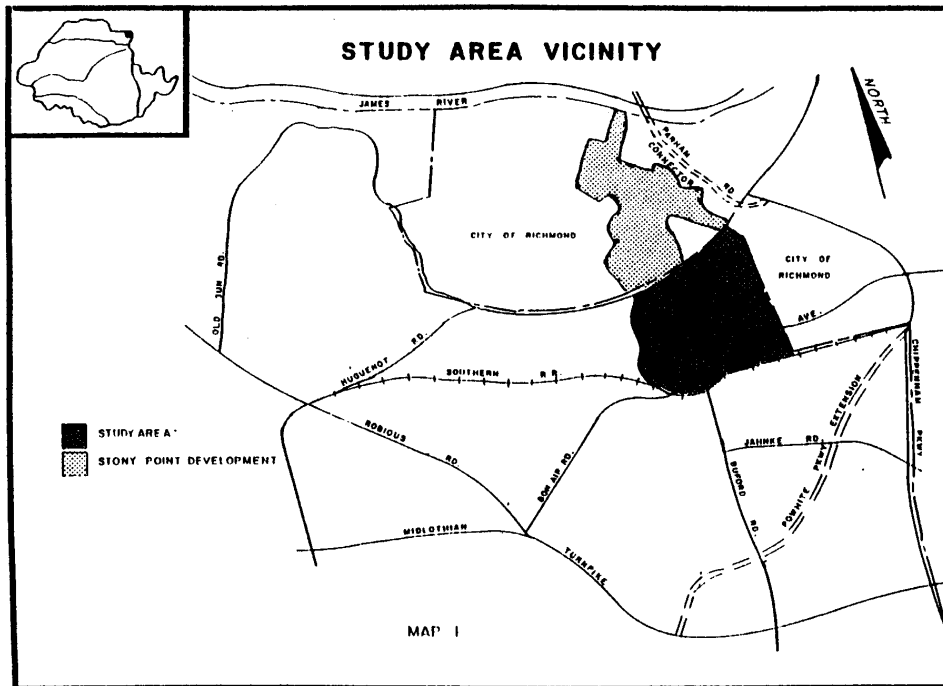
Bon Air is a unique community with a rich history and distinctive character. Its distinctiveness is a product of its Victorian origin as well as the attitudes of the residents through the years who have wanted to preserve the best of Bon Air's past.

Established in 1877 as a summer resort, Bon Air became a popular summer haven for city weary Richmonders for more than a decade. The main focus of the resort was the Bon Air Hotel which provided a variety of recreational activities from games to dances. Some of the vacationers enjoyed Bon Air enough to establish permanent residences in the community.

The loss by fire of the Bon Air Hotel in 1889 led to a decline of the resort business in Bon Air. The community continued to slowly gain permanent inhabitants from the 1890's to the early 1900's. Thirteen homes in the study area were constructed prior to 1905. These dwellings are located close to the railroad tracks along Buford Road between Kenwin and Rockaway and west to McRae Street (See Map 2).

The end of Bon Air's resort era came with the advent of the automobile and WWI. By this time, however, residents had built schools, a library and churches, and had established the Bon Air Community House. These public facilities provided services to inhabitants and enabled Bon Air to evolve into a closely knit village. Homes constructed during this phase of village evolution (1906-1929) are located along Burroughs Street

and north of Kenwin Avenue, indicating an expansion of the village. Twelve of these houses



lie within the study area boundary and continue to be used as homes today (See Map 2).

Development of Bon Air remained within the original village boundaries until the mid 1940's when nationwide suburban development began in earnest following the end of WWII. Brookwood was the first subdivision to be developed outside the original boundaries and was built during these years (See Map 3). In 1949, a shopping center was constructed on the corner of Forest Hill Avenue and Buford Road, firmly establishing this area as Bon Air's commercial center.

During the 1950's, approximately 21% of the existing houses were constructed. The major subdivisions developed during this decade were Bon Air Knolls Annex, Bon Air Heights and Mohawk.

The next ten years (1960-1969), saw a surge in home construction in Bon Air with over 50% of the existing homes built during these years.

Home development has slowed during the past twenty years. The last major subdivision to be developed was the forty-eight lot subdivision of Grand Summit Station, begun in the late 1970's. Presently, homes are being built in the new subdivision of Ainsworth Acres, a seven lot development located adjacent to Grand Summit.

Homes in Bon Air have been well maintained over the years and today the median value is \$60,206. Over 88% of the dwellings in Bon Air are owner occupied. Rental units include an apartment building, duplexes and single family houses. The apartments are housed in the Old Bon Air Hotel Annex, constructed in 1881. In the late 1960's, the Annex was renovated and the number of units expanded from six to ten. There are two rental duplexes on Buford Road south of Rockaway Road and two more on Rockaway Road east of Buford. Other rental units, generally single family dwellings, are scattered throughout the area. According to 1980 census data, the mean rent in 1980 for Bon Air was \$236 a month.

The study area is part of a larger census tract for data gathering purposes (Map 4). According to 1980 census figures, residents of this area are well educated and had a median income of \$30,657. The vast majority (over 75%) of the wage earners were employed in either professional services, business or management. Employment in these fields increased more than 47% from 1970 figures. The population of the census tract changed little in the decade between 1970 and 1980. Total population increased only 4% overall. While the age group under 18 decreased 28%, those between 18 and 64 and

over 65 increased 27% and 105% respectively with the latter being a 123 person increase.

The study area itself contained 2106 people according to 1980 census figures. The major differences in population make up between the entire census tract and the study area were that 64% of the total population was between the ages of 18-64 in the entire tract but over 78% of the same age group in the study area. There were 16% fewer residents under 18 in the study area than in the whole tract. However, there was almost 7% more residents over 65 in the study area.

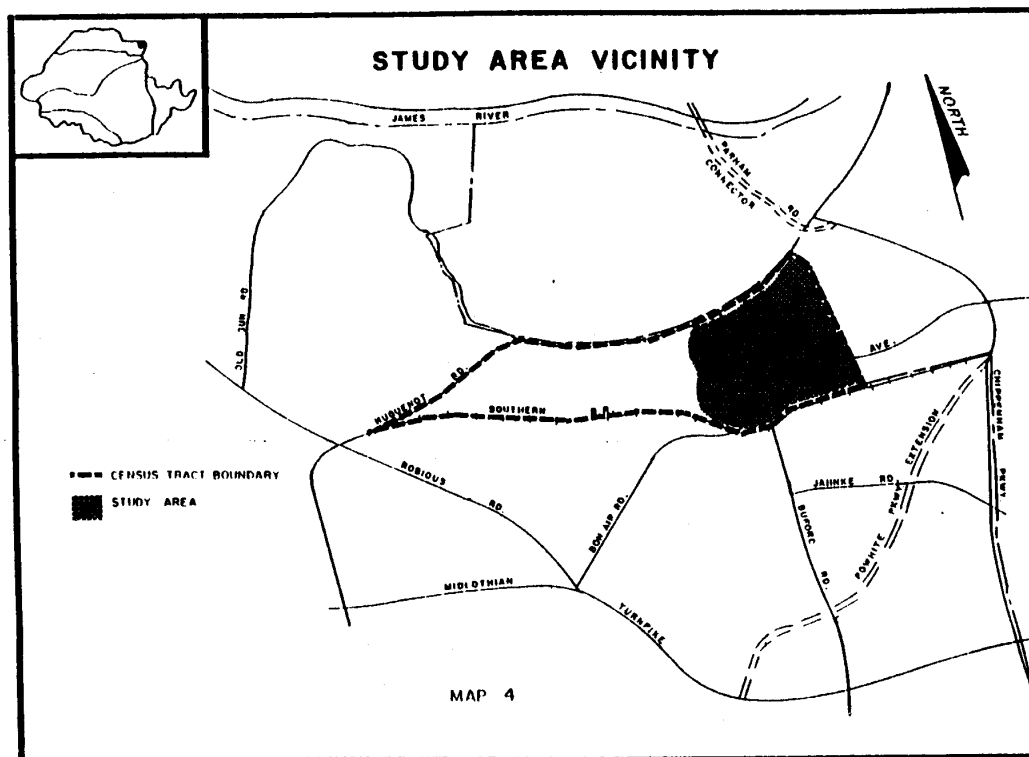
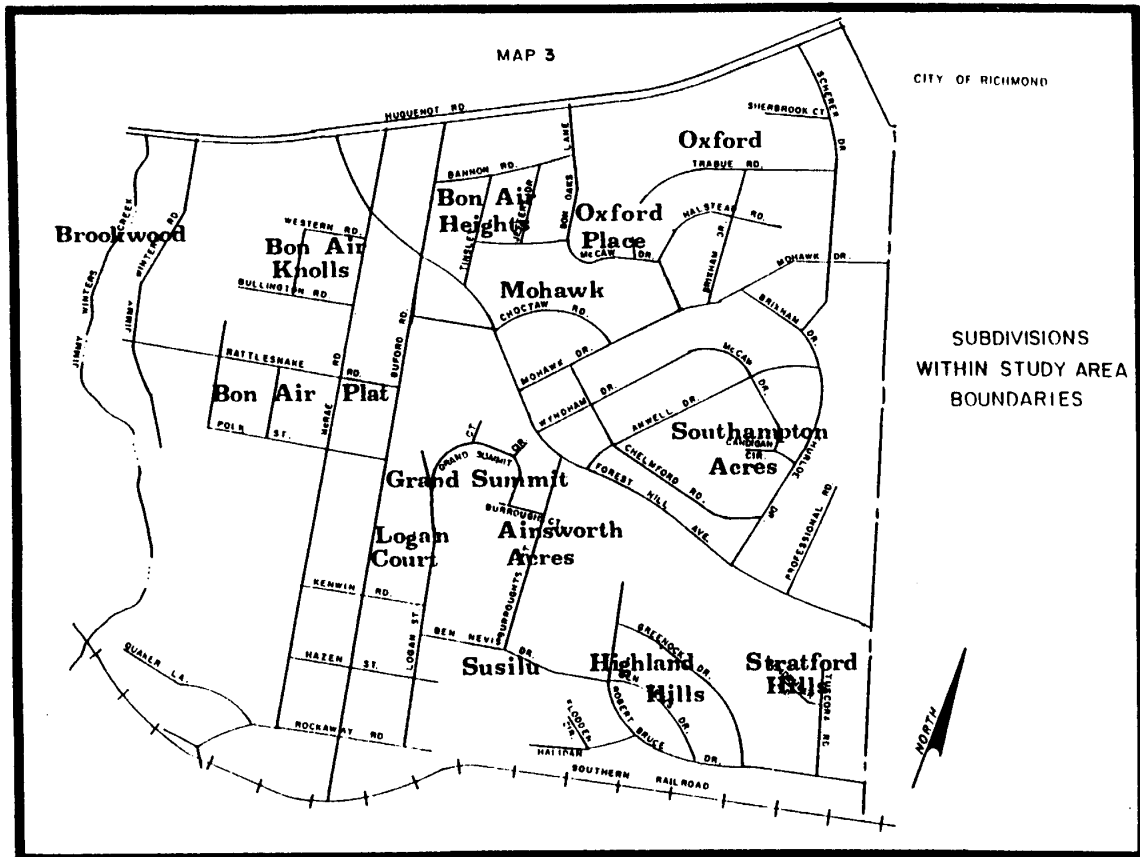
These differences would seem to show that Bon Air is more homogeneous and the population is older than in the surrounding area. Bon Air began as a homogeneous community and today it remains so. Paradoxically, it is perhaps because Bon Air's population has remained homogeneous that the community has retained its distinctive identity.

Citizens of Bon Air are proud of their community heritage. In 1978, concerned residents founded the Bon Air Historic Society. The main purpose of this society is to promote the history of Bon Air for residents and nonresidents alike. To achieve this goal, the society sponsors programs related to historic Bon Air and aides in the restoration of historic sites and properties in the community. In 1979, the society obtained official County recognition of the "Old Bon Air Historic Area" (See Map 5). The society members erected old fashioned signs at either end of the historic area on Buford Road. In addition, the society worked with the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation to keep the railroad bridge on Buford in character with the old wooden bridge it replaced. Present efforts are focused on working with the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission to have the "Old Bon Air Historic Area" designated as a Virginia Historic Landmark, entered into the Virginia Landmarks Register and eventually to have the Historic Area entered into the National Register of Historic Places. This effort will mean that historic Bon Air will be recognized by every level of government as an historic place and residents hope that this recognition will keep Bon Air as it is today, as it was yesterday -- unique.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: LAND USE

The long history of Bon Air Village within the County is reflected by the fact that the land area is almost fully developed with few vacant tracts remaining (See Map 6). Although Bon Air is first and foremost a place to live, commercial activity

has grown steadily in the Village center since the opening of a gas station at the intersection of Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue in the 1920's. The commercial center now encompasses a six block area and provides a variety of services to the residents of the greater Bon Air Community. Most residents responding to the questionnaire indicated they do at least some shopping in the Village, and with few exceptions the retail uses are of the sort to serve a neighborhood rather than



a regional clientele; for example, beauty shops, groceries, pharmacies, cafes and dry cleaning establishments.

Most significant in Bon Air's recent history of commercial growth has been the development of several new office parks within the Village center. Since 1970, the Village Square development, Bon Air Green Phase I and the SDT Office Park off Forest Hill Avenue near the Richmond Corporate Line have added more than 76,000 square feet of office space to the study area. Bon Air Green Phase II with 24,000 square feet is currently under construction on a 1.5 acre site on Buford Road between the Bank of Virginia and the Southern Bank buildings. It is anticipated that this space will be fully occupied shortly after construction is complete. Of the 39,000 square feet approved for development at the SDT Office Park, approximately 11,000 square feet have been developed to date, leaving a potential opportunity for an additional 28,000 square feet of new office space to be developed at this location. An additional 1,361 square feet of office space is currently available for lease within the Village center at two other locations; the office building adjacent to the SDT Office Park and at 8709 Choctaw Drive. Of the 115,000 square feet of office space approved within the study area, almost one fourth remains to be developed.

To gain a sense of perspective, it is necessary to view the vacancy rate and the potential for new office space in the study area within the context of the greater Richmond area office space situation.

In a mid-year review of the local commercial real estate market, a spokesman for Morton G. Thalheimer Inc. stated that although the Richmond area is experiencing an office construction boom and the vacancy rate is rising, in his opinion the area is not yet overbuilt in terms of office space. Based upon the metro area economy, the vacant space now available will be absorbed within a two to three year period. Also noted was the fact that based upon current and proposed construction plans, the area south of the James River is now becoming a significant factor in the suburban office market in the metro area.

The 393-acre Stony Point development across Huguenot Road in the City of Richmond is expected to have an impact upon the future of the Bon Air commercial center. Construction on elements in the first 134-acre phase is nearly complete and includes a shopping center, a housing project for the elderly, an apartment complex and business and medical office space. The proposed second phase of the project calls for a 300-room hotel, a 508-unit apartment building, 1.1 million square feet of office space and 405,000 square feet of retail space as well as

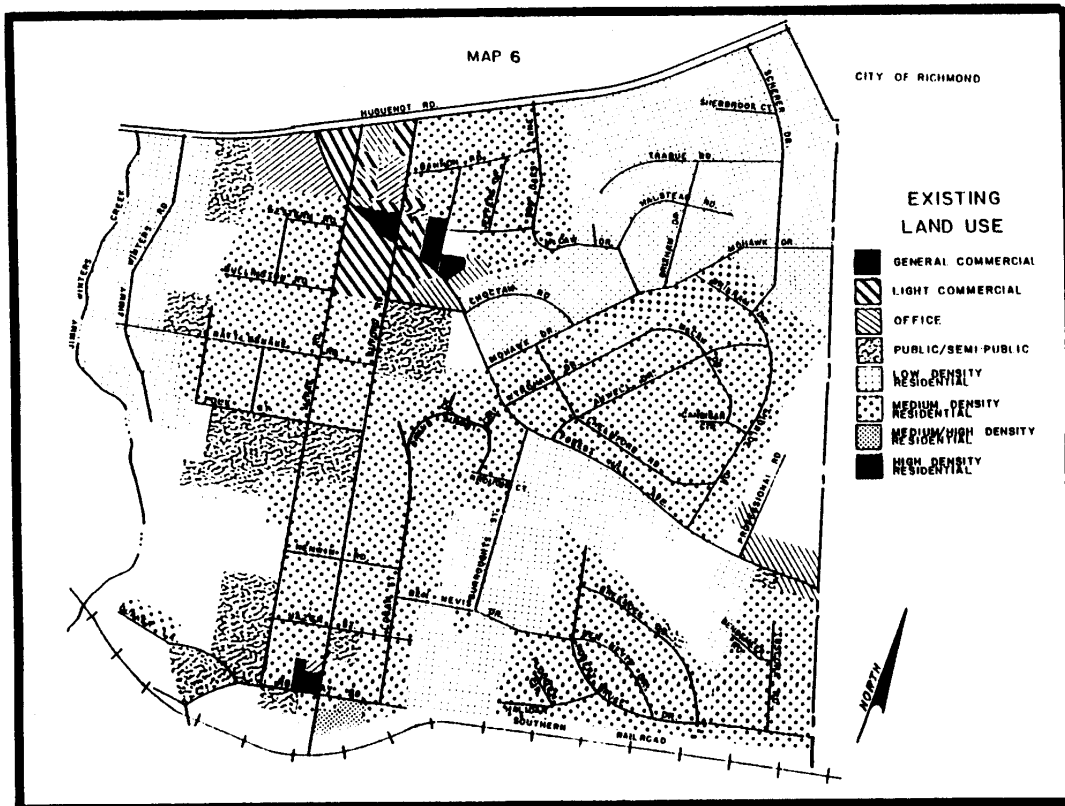
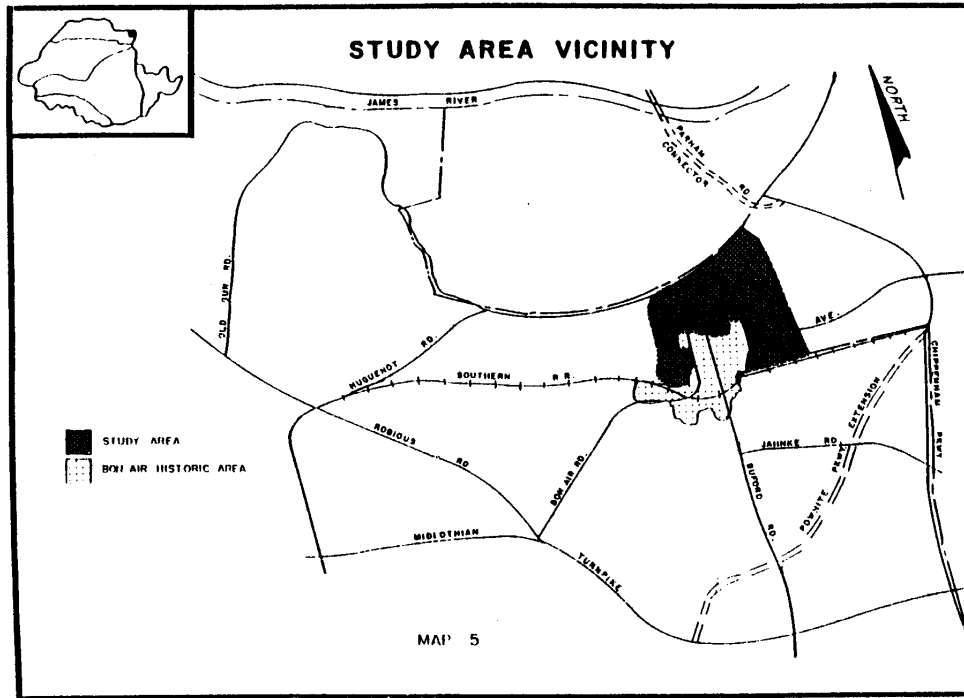
nine single family homes. The second phase development encompasses approximately 259 acres of land area. If approved by the Richmond City Council, work on the second phase of the project will be tied to the construction of the Parham-Chippenham Connector, scheduled to begin in early 1987 and to be complete by late 1989 or early 1990. As currently proposed by the developer, all access for Phase II will be limited to the Parham-Chippenham connector. Full development will occur over a fifteen to twenty year period.

The effect of the Stony Point development upon the Bon Air Village commercial center is difficult to gauge at this time, with a number of scenarios possible. Mutual coexistence with little effect upon the Village center may result if Stony Point office and retail space is leased by large business concerns drawing from and designed to serve a wide geographic area. Office and retail space in Bon Air Village is typically leased by the small business owner whose clients reside in the immediate area. Alternatively, the presence of a large new business center and the increased regional accessibility brought about by the Parham-Chippenham Connector may result in a "spin-off" effect, bringing increased pressure for business development to Bon Air. A third possibility is that competition from new retail concerns in Stony Point may result in decreased village business activity and a consequent increase in vacancy rates and/or a changing mix of commercial uses.

Another phenomenon of significance to the study area is the relative frequency of requests for conversion of residential property to business use which has occurred within the Village center, particularly since 1975 (See Map 7) and particularly for properties located along Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue. Although as many requests have been denied as approved by the Board of Supervisors, the result has been a situation where business uses are adjacent to residences in several Village center locations. The surrounding subdivisions of Bon Air Heights, Mohawk and Bon Air Knolls have been particularly affected by this process. Stony Point may be expected to have an impact on this conversion process as well, in as much as the phenomenon reflects a demand for business space. It is likely, however, that other factors beyond the demand for business space have been operational. Increased traffic on Forest Hill Avenue and Buford Road and adjacent structures' conversions to business use have resulted in some properties becoming less desirable as residences than they were in the past. Office and multifamily development which has occurred on Forest Hill Avenue just outside the study area in the City of

Richmond, coupled with the fact that Richmond's Master Plan proposes more of the same, may be generating the expectation that Chesterfield's section of Forest Hill Avenue will develop the same way.

Requests for conversion to business uses and demolition of existing structures to build anew may be expected to continue within the study area to some degree no matter what happens on



the periphery, as vacant land is scarce and limited primarily to the steep slopes of natural drainageways (See Map 8). Prime development land exists at two (2) separate locations on Forest Hill Avenue; a 4.2 acre tract at Forest Hill and Choctaw Road north of Grand Summit Subdivision, and a 7.5 acre tract across from Thurloe Drive. An additional adjacent 18.5 acres may eventually be redeveloped at greater density than the low density residential pattern which exists there now. Rising land values along Forest Hill Avenue, coupled with the fact that several of the structures are in disrepair make it appear likely that pressure for redevelopment will be felt in time.

In addition to the vacant land on Forest Hill Avenue, part of the Bon Air Presbyterian Church site may have potential for development. The land area is adjacent to the rear of the Bon Air Branch Library site. The County School Board owns approximately nine undeveloped acres along Jimmy Winters Creek south of the Bon Air Elementary School. This land is wooded and steep, with slopes generally in excess of 20% making it unlikely that urban development will ever occur in this location. The Southern Railroad owns a 3.6 acre tract on the south side of Quaker Lane adjacent to the railroad tracks and the Bon Air Community Association property. Slopes averaging approximately 12% make this property suitable for residential or recreational use. Two adjacent lots totalling approximately .75 acre on McCaw Drive at Tinsley Drive remain undeveloped due to topographic constraints and poor soil conditions. In this undeveloped state, these lots serve as something of a buffer between Bon Air Heights and the shopping center on Tinsley Drive.

The importance of commercial activity in Bon Air should not obscure the fact that the study area is predominantly a single family residential community located squarely in the midst of a larger area of similar development, both south and west in Chesterfield and north and east in Richmond. Little multi-family development exists within the study area at this time; ten units at the Bon Air Hotel Annex and four duplexes on Rockaway Road.

Light and general commercial, office and public/semi-public uses within the Village center reflect a variety of zoning classifications; B-1, B-2, O and A with Conditional Use Planned Development. Remaining study area property is zoned Residential (R-15) which permits lots of a minimum 15,000 square feet (See Map 9).

Public or semi-public uses which exist within the study area are four churches, two recreation

associations, three schools, a library, a fire station and a water tower.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: TRANSPORTATION

The major roads which carry a relatively high volume of traffic within the Bon Air Village are Huguenot Road (Route 147), Buford Road (Route. 678) and Forest Hill Avenue (Route 683) (See Map 1).

In reviewing traffic volumes and traffic patterns in the Bon Air area, it appears that Huguenot Road and Forest Hill Avenue function as commuter routes to facilitate travel between the County and the central Richmond area. In the same review, it appears that Buford Road serves basically two functions; one, as the principle collector road for a large percentage of the residential traffic in Bon Air and two, as a connecting route for through traffic, linking Midlothian Turnpike (Route. 60) and Huguenot Road. **General Plan 2000** classifies Buford Road as a minor arterial and Huguenot Road and Forest Hill Avenue as major arterials.

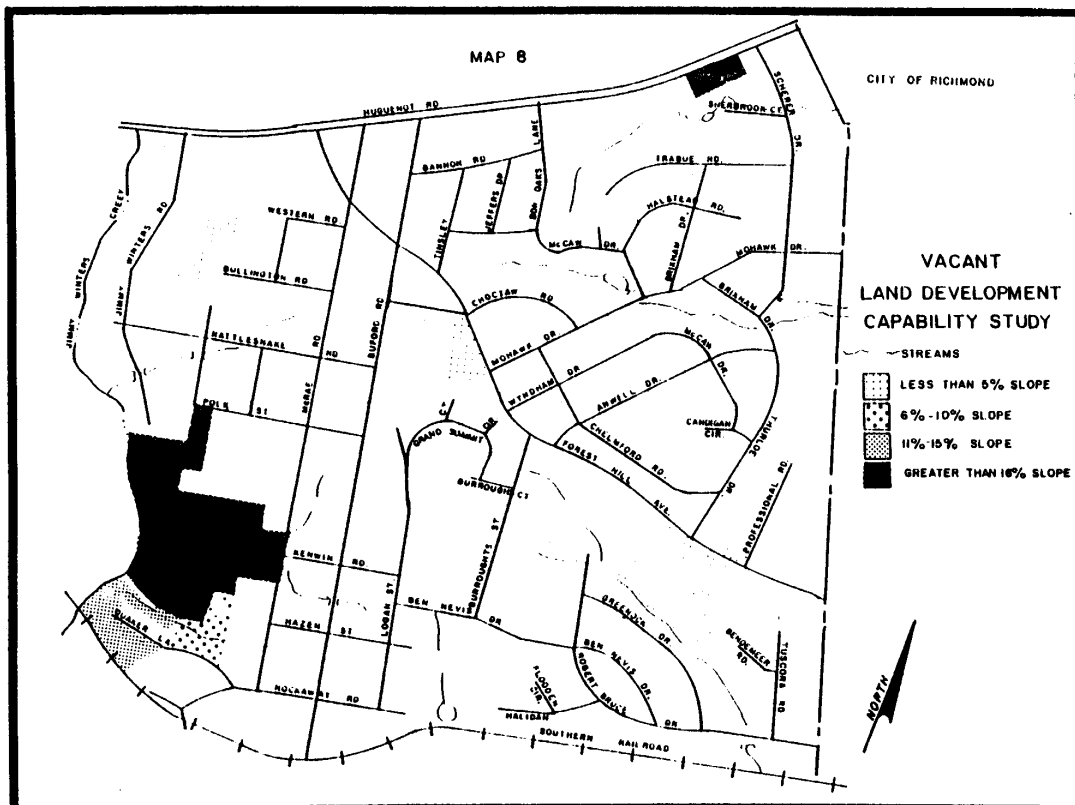
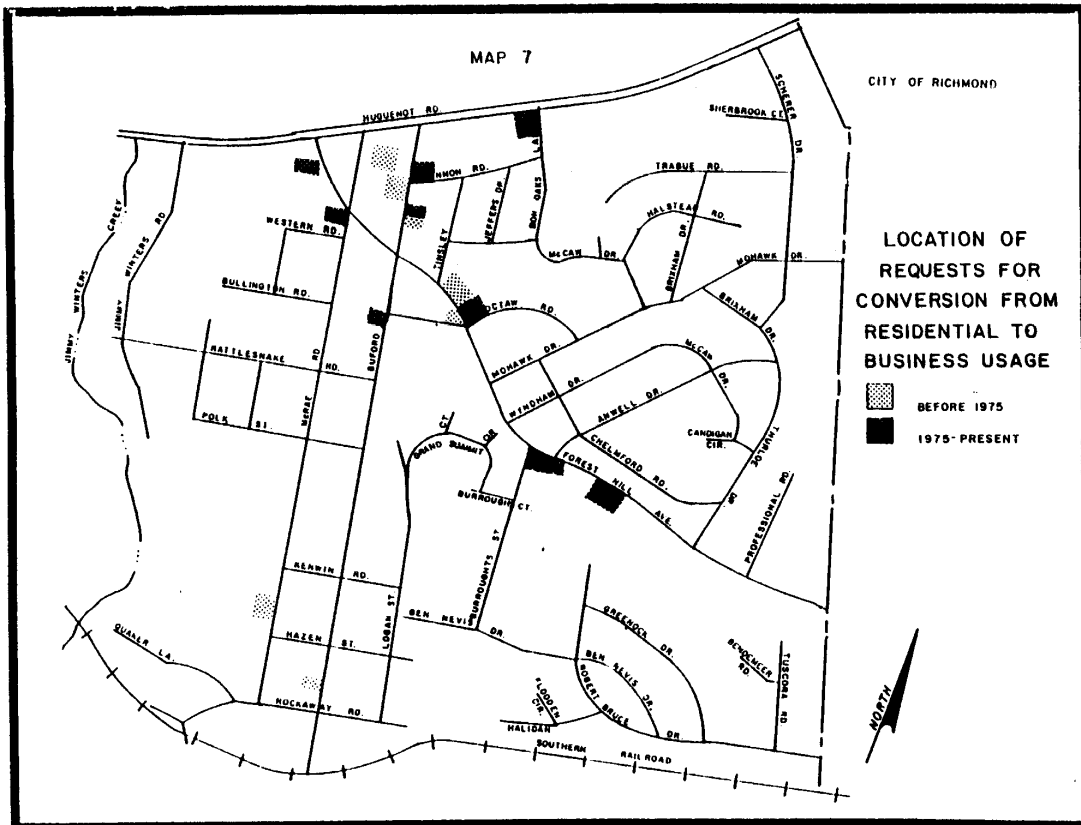
1984 Vehicle Per Day Counts (VPD) on Huguenot Road from Robious Road to Buford and from Buford to the Richmond Corporate Line were 19,655 and 22,980 respectively. The Richmond Metropolitan Area Transportation Planning Organization 1995 Model that was approved in 1980 forecast that Huguenot Road will carry between 19,754 and 26,727 VPD by 1995.

The project of widening Huguenot Road to a four-lane typical section from Dolfield Road to Route 60 is scheduled for advertisement in July 1986 with an anticipated completion date twelve to eighteen months later. Improvements to the intersection of Huguenot and Robious Road (Route 711), which include four lane widening of the approach legs, the construction of dual left, free right turn lanes and installation of a new traffic signal are currently under construction with an anticipated completion date of November 1985. Once all the improvements are complete, Huguenot Road will have an improved level of service to better handle current and forecast traffic demands.

The corridor alignment for the Parham-Chippenham Connector, just north of the study area has been approved by The Highway Commission (See Map 1). Construction is expected to begin by early 1987 with completion anticipated by mid 1990. VDH&T is currently developing con-

struction plans for this project. A recommended typical section for this road has not been determined at this time, nor has a final decision been made on the Huguenot Road and Forest Hill Avenue intersections. Latest design consideration provides for at-grade intersections, with sufficient right of way acquisition to construct grade-separated interchanges if warranted in the future.

Stony Point is a mixed use development located



within the Richmond city limits just north of the study area. As currently planned, Phase II of the Stony Point development will generate approximately 37,328 Average Daily Trips (ADT) and proposed direct access to the Parham-Chippenham Connector. If the developer's access plan is approved as proposed, a traffic impact study prepared by the consulting engineering firm forecasts that approximately 8,000 average daily trips will initially be distributed on Huguenot Road south of its intersection with the Parham-Chippenham Connector intersection. The traffic study further assumes a relatively minimal impact on Buford Road of approximately 700 ADT. With the proposed improvements, Huguenot Road should be able to absorb these additional traffic volumes at a reasonable level of service.

The 1984 Vehicle Per Day counts (VPD) for Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue for those sections which are in the study area were 10,995 and 13,022, respectively. Both roadways have right of way widths of 60 feet. The 1995 Model forecasts a range of 11,730 - 14,182 VPD for Buford Road and a range of 20,036 - 23,137 for Forest Hill Avenue. The ranges were arrived at by testing various combinations of highway improvement projects with transit facilities. One of these alternatives neglected all transit improvements beyond the existing transit facilities. Among the highway projects under consideration were the additions of Route 288 from Route 360 West to I-64 West; Powhite Parkway from Route 60 to Old Hundred Road north of the Brandermill area; the Parham-Chippenham Connector; the widening of Chippenham from Forest Hill Avenue to Huguenot Road; and the widening of Forest Hill Avenue from Huguenot Road to Chippenham Parkway.

The results of the 1995 Model led to the conclusion that no matter what combination of reasonable highway and transit improvements are implemented Forest Hill Avenue will need to be improved. However, an improvement project for Forest Hill Avenue is not scheduled in the current Six-Year Secondary Road Construction Plan for Transportation Improvements. VDH&T tolerable standards suggest four-laning a road when the VPD count reaches approximately 7500 vehicles.

While total traffic volumes have increased on Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue since 1978, the percentage increases on these roads have slowed dramatically (See Map 10). This may be attributed to the congestion of these roadways as a result of the existing volumes absorbing the available capacity. This results in resident motorists and other through trip motorists using

other routes to avoid the congestion. Even though most of the land in Bon Air has developed, the VPD counts have significantly increased on several adjoining secondary roads which supports this conclusion. For example, McRae Road is used as an alternate route between Rockaway and Huguenot, and Mohawk Drive - Scherer Road has become a bypass for Huguenot Road.

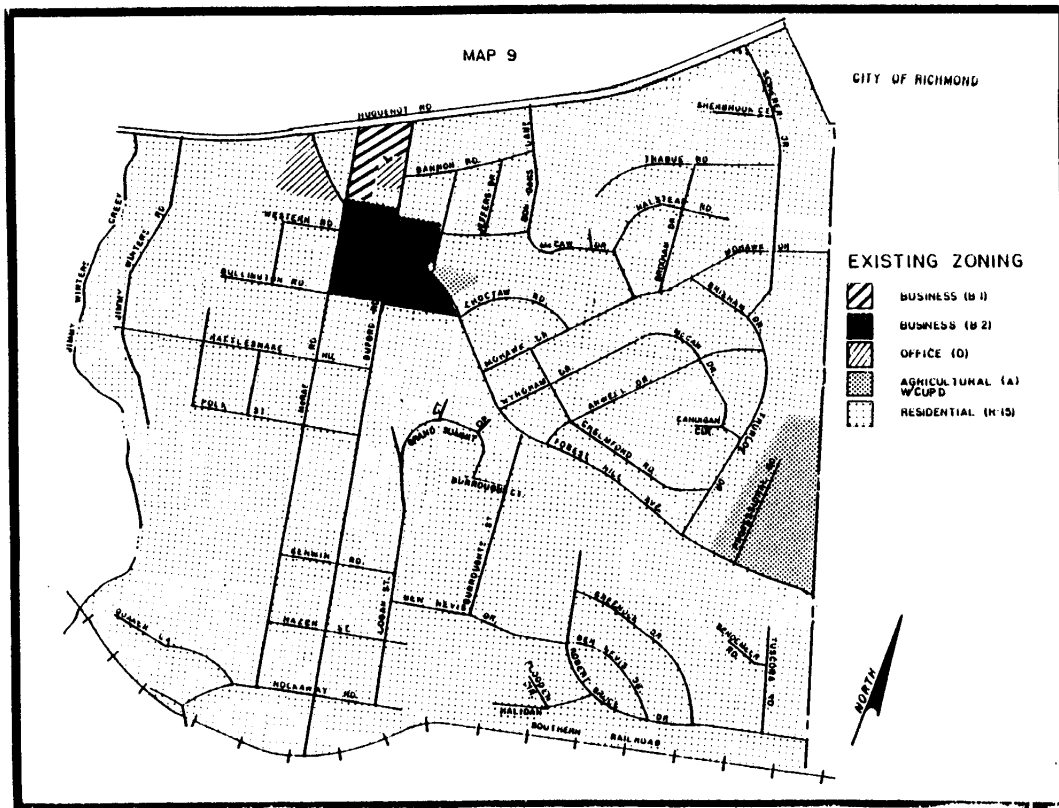
As part of the review of traffic safety in the study area, accident statistics were obtained from the County's Police Communications and Records Department (See Map 11). As should be expected, the intersection of Forest Hill and Buford experienced the greatest number of accidents within the study area since 1983. This can be attributed to the relatively high traffic volumes and number of conflict locations, which result in numerous opportunities for turn movements as motorists attempt to enter and exit adjacent residential and commercial or office developments. Analysis of this information further reveals that the same dynamics are probably responsible for accidents at the intersection of McRae Road and Forest Hill Avenue. Accidents at Buford and Huguenot and Forest Hill and Huguenot are more frequently the result of moving violations such as following too closely, failing to stop or to yield the right of way. Available sight distance may contribute to most accidents along Buford, specifically at its intersection with Rockaway Road as the vertical and horizontal alignments restrict sight distance north on Buford.

Observation of several worn paths indicate that some pedestrian as well as bicycle circulation exists within the study area. These paths are evident along some portions of Buford Road and the southern side of Forest Hill Avenue, and along side streets surrounding the public and private schools. Under current School Board policy, bus service is available to all school children who attend Bon Air Elementary. Therefore, the paths in the school area within an approximate quarter mile radius are most likely the result of off-hour use of the school site recreation facilities as fewer than a dozen students walk to school. School personnel report that no children ride bicycles to school.

Walking or bicycle riding along several roads in the study area is unsafe because of inadequate shoulder width, proximity of adjacent development, inadequate sight distance and high traffic volumes. Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue are difficult to cross because of these factors. It should be noted that the community facilities which may be expected to attract a large percentage of children and others on foot or on

bicycles (the schools, library and community recreation association) are located on the western side of Buford Road while the greater population concentration is located east of Buford and Forest Hill. There are no bicycle lanes or sidewalks within the study area. Installation of these features could result in more and safer pedestrian trips and fewer vehicle trips which would be a welcome change for those living within the community.

Bus service is available to the area with the nearest stop at Stony Point and Huguenot.



MAP 10

AVERAGE VEHICLES PER DAY

ROAD	1970	1978	1970-78 % CHANGE	1984	1978-84 % CHANGE
BUFORD ROAD	7,144	9,950	39%	10,995	11%
FOREST HILL AVENUE	7,858	11,981	52%	13,022	9%
HUGUENOT ROAD	6,925	16,275*	135%	21,316*	31%

* TRAFFIC COUNTS ON HUGUENOT ROAD ARE THE AVERAGE OF TWO SECTIONS. 1) FROM ROBIOUS ROAD TO BUFORD INTERSECTION. 2) FROM BUFORD TO RICHMOND CITY LIMITS

GRTC is currently reviewing its ridership figures to evaluate if additional area stops are warranted. Currently, there are buses scheduled to depart for the downtown Richmond area at 7:14 and 7:44 a.m. and return to Bon Air at 4:49 and 5:19 p.m. Bon Air Baptist Church on Buford Road makes its parking lot available as a community service for commuters desiring to "park and ride".

EXISTING CONDITIONS: PUBLIC FACILITIES

Drainage

Since its creation in 1977, the Environmental Engineering Department has reviewed road, lot and site drainage plans for new subdivisions and commercial development. This engineering and construction review has eliminated major drainage problems in new development since that time. In addition, in 1977 the Department initiated a program estimated to cost \$1,095,000 to correct drainage problems created by past development in existing residential subdivisions, especially those where flooding of structures occurred. Projects included in this Program were classified priority 1 or priority 2. Priority 1 projects correct a drainage situation in which structures are affected when heavy rains occur; priority 2 projects improve the livability of neighborhoods in which water stands for lengthy periods or, in some instances, the drainage flow causes severe erosion, but in either instance structures are not affected.

Program projects of particular interest to the residents of Bon Air include the \$300,000 Jimmy Winters Creek Project Phase I and Phase II (priority 2), the \$106,000 Bon Air Drainage project (priority 2), and the Buford-Polk-Rattlesnake Roads project which was completed in April 1984.

Engineering plans for Jimmy Winters Creek are complete and the Environmental Engineering Department has been closely monitoring the effect the Stony Point development now under construction is having on the ultimate level of the Creek. Until the last six months, five lakes with retention capability were adequately handling the drainage on the Stony Point site. However, this situation has now changed downstream of Rattlesnake Road. Severe erosion has taken place from Rattlesnake Road downstream approximately 600 feet. As a result, the project has been broken into Phase I (\$200,000) and Phase II (\$100,000).

The Bon Air Drainage project refers to the construction of a drainage way from the Forest Hill/McRae Road intersection to Jimmy Winters

Creek. As this is an old area of Bon Air, no drainage plans were ever designed. The terrain is relatively flat, and there is no positive drainage from the intersection of Forest Hill and McRae Road west to Jimmy Winters Creek. When the project was first conceived, two yards received water from upstream on almost every rain and approximately three yards were flooded during hard rains. However, ordinary maintenance procedures appear to have corrected the problem. No flooding has been experienced for the past three year period. Environmental Engineering is monitoring the situation at this time.

In many instances, houses in the older sections of Bon Air were built on sloping lots below the elevation of the roadways. In some cases, roadside ditches are nonexistent or too shallow to prevent the run-off from heavy rains from flowing across lawn areas towards house foundations. In other locations drainage pipes are too small and need to be replaced by larger pipes. The VDH&T is the agency responsible for the construction and maintenance of roadside ditches and culverts. There are no plans for improvement of these ditches at this time.

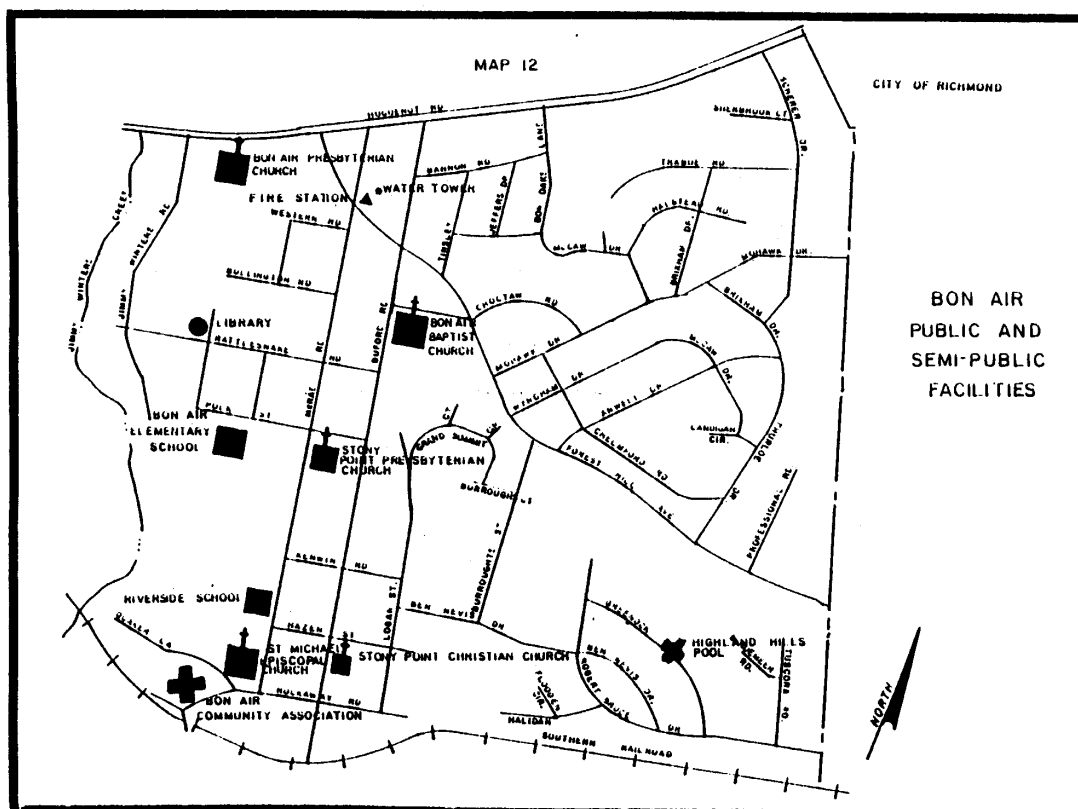
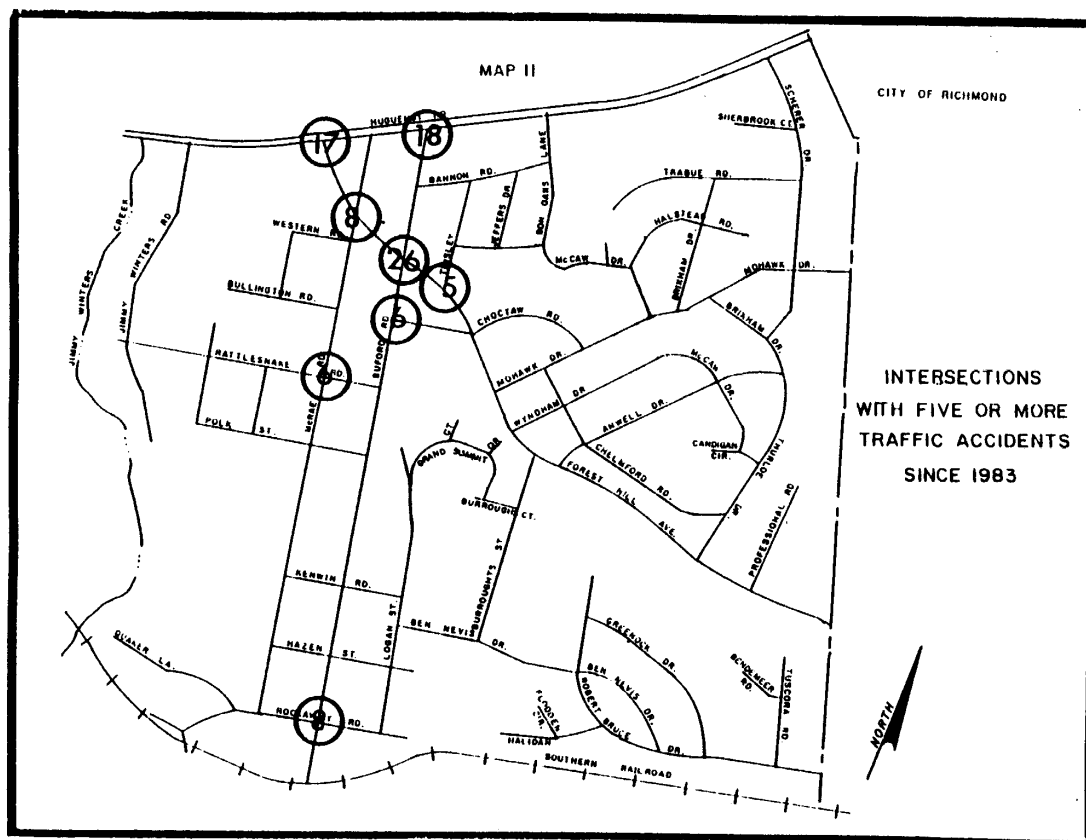
Drainage problems exist in Grand Summit although the subdivision was recorded in 1978 after County review procedures were in place. Water from properties upstream drains through an area which is recorded as a 50' natural buffer on the subdivision plat. If left in its natural state, the wooded buffer should have been adequate to handle the drainage flow. However, the homes in Grand Summit were built within five feet of the buffer. Homeowners cleared the undergrowth and planted lawn areas, thereby exposing the running water and possibly increasing its velocity.

The combination of this clearing and some yard filling that was done has resulted in serious drainage problems for three lots on Logan Street.

Since 1982, the County has done some minor work through the area in conjunction with the homeowners to alleviate the drainage problems. As a result, the drainage situation has improved during lesser rains but the problem is still serious during moderate to severe storms. The Environmental Engineering Department is in the process of obtaining estimates from an engineering consultant to design a drainage system which will correct the problem.

Other residents in Grand Summit experience minimum sheet flow of water from vacant wooded property to the rear of their lots. In view of current County policy, it is unlikely that the County will take any steps to address this situation as it now exists. If the vacant property at Forest Hill Avenue and Choctaw Road develops as it is

presently zoned (R-15 single family residential) as frontage lots, the Environmental Engineering Department can not require drainage plans. The lot clearing and paved areas associated with construction will intensify the sheet drainage flow. If, on the other hand, the property develops with a greater intensity use, Environmental Engineering will require a drainage plan which requires the use of drainage easements that exist on lots in Grand Summit. This will result in a significant reduction of the sheet flow, and would also improve the



drainage situation downstream of Bon Air Baptist Church on the three Logan Street lots.

Fire Protection

The Bon Air Fire Station, Company #4, (See Map 12) is located within the study area on the east side of Buford Road in the block between Bannon Road and Forest Hill Avenue. Although current plans are to close the Bon Air Station when the new Robious Fire Station is complete (1988), the study area will still have adequate fire protection as it will be within the desired five minute service radius of both the Robious Station and the Buford Road Station. The Buford Road Station is located near the intersection of Buford Road and Midlothian Turnpike and has been in operation since 1983. This Station has been providing service coverage to the study area along with the Bon Air Station #4 since that time. In addition, a fire station located across Huguenot Road in the City of Richmond provides backup service to the study area in the event of need.

Sewer and Water

The entire study area is currently served by County water. The lines serving the original Bon Air Plat, Southampton Acres and Highland Hills are, for the most part, less than four inches in diameter. The rest of Bon Air is served by water lines which are six inches or larger.

Sewer service is available to most Bon Air residents, except for those living in the original Bon Air Plat. There are no plans to extend sewer service to Bon Air Plat at this time. The Utilities Department is currently designing a system to determine the priority order for extension of sewer service to existing subdivisions throughout the County. Among the criteria will be the average age of the homes and the condition of the septic systems, the number and severity of problems experienced, soil conditions, cost and the number of residents who indicate a willingness to use County sewer.

Generally, sewer lines serving Bon Air were designed to serve an overall population density of ten people per acre. With regard to the development of the vacant properties along Forest Hill Avenue, the reserve capacity to accommodate a greater density can be acquired by relaying approximately 500± feet of sewer lines. It is also possible that a detailed hydraulic analysis could show that reserve capacity already exists. In either case, sewer capacity alone would not prevent either vacant Forest Hill Avenue tract from developing at either an office or multifamily density.

Schools

The study area falls within the attendance zones of Bon Air Elementary, Robious Middle and Midlothian High Schools. According to School Administration projections, Bon Air Elementary School is expected to have 574 pupils by 1989. The current program capacity of the school is 654, meaning an excess capacity of 80 spaces is projected. Robious Middle School is expected to have 1,175 pupils by 1989. The current program capacity of Robious is 1,350 pupils, meaning an excess of 175 spaces is projected. On the other hand, Midlothian High School is projecting 1,949 pupils by 1989 while current program capacity is 1,600 pupils, meaning a deficit of 349 spaces is projected. In 1984, the School Administration prepared a facility study which identified expenditures necessary to meet system-wide school program and population needs through the Fall of 1989. A \$1,750,000 addition of classroom space to Midlothian High School is planned to expand the use capacity to 2,000 students by the Fall of 1986. Current plans are that the addition will be paid for through Literary Loan Funds and the School Administration is now awaiting approval of the application by the State Board of Education.

In addition, the bond issue scheduled for referendum this November includes funds for conversion of interior space to self-contained classrooms, and modifications to building and equipment to provide energy conservation, air conditioning and the installation of a facilities management system to Robious Middle School. The School Administration intends to conduct further studies to determine the feasibility of spending approximately \$700,000 for modifications to Bon Air Elementary School in order to provide total air conditioning.

Parks

The Bon Air study area is within three miles of both the 57 acre Huguenot Park, the Greenfield Athletic Complex and the Robious Athletic Complex. The Chesterfield Plan for Public Facilities sets a three-mile radius as the desired level of service for community parks and athletic centers, therefore, the Bon Air community would seem to be adequately served in this regard. The Huguenot Park Bond item contains a request for \$165,000 for improvements scheduled as Phase III of the park development; i.e., paved roads and parking and lighting for basketball courts. An additional \$50,000 in improvements is proposed for the Greenfield Athletic Complex; to include a paved parking lot, a portable restroom building, signage, additional topsoil for soccer areas and irrigation for athletic fields. \$280,000 in proposed

improvements for the Robious Athletic Complex includes parking for the football/soccer area, security lights, additional topsoil for the soccer/football area, construction of three new soccer fields, road paving and air conditioning for the building.

In addition, the Public Facilities Plan recommends that school sites serve as neighborhood recreation centers with shared use of ballfields and play equipment. According to Department of Parks and Recreation staff, the play equipment and ballfields available at Bon Air Elementary School are typical of facilities available at school sites around the County. The additional acreage the County owns adjacent to the elementary school site represents an opportunity to expand the facilities available to the neighborhood. Preliminary examination of the property indicates potential exists for passive recreational use; specifically the development of hiking and bike trails, picnicing and nature interpretation. There is evidence that many of these activities are occurring now. The presence of three apparently hand dug depressions (possibly ice pits) that are now grown over may offer the opportunity for some minor historical interpretations. There are two small, relatively level areas that would offer possibilities for picnic area development if access to the parcel was improved. The site is not readily accessible to the school parking areas and has no other road frontage. Acquisition of some additional property easement to secure area for a trailhead at McCray Road would greatly enhance the accessibility of the site for passive recreational uses and for a transportation link between the Bon Air Branch Library, the public and private schools and the Bon Air Recreation Association (See Map 12).

Library

The Bon Air Branch Library is one of the most heavily used branches in the County Library system. As such, an expenditure request of \$520,000 has been included in the Capital Improvements Program to build new space and to renovate the existing space. (The preliminary building program is under review at this time and it is possible that the dollar amount will change.) This expansion will enable the branch to house an additional 14,000 volumes and to increase the seating capacity from 53 to 68 spaces. Modifications to the existing building will also improve the internal organization of the public and employee work areas and will increase the flexibility of the meeting room facility. As the Library System requests will not be included in the November 1985 Bond Issue Referendum, it is not possible to know when these improvements will be funded. The existing site area is adequate

to accommodate the building expansion planned but additional land is needed to accommodate the increased parking required. The 50 parking spaces provided now are inadequate at present levels of usage. It is anticipated that an additional 50 spaces will be needed upon completion of the building expansion. The possibility of acquiring land to the rear of the library site which is owned by the Bon Air Presbyterian Church should be explored by the County.

THE ADOPTED PLAN

The Adopted Plan is in accordance with the following relevant goals and policies expressed in the **General Plan 2000**; to assure convenient, attractive and livable residential areas by conserving and protecting existing sound development, by discouraging the continuing spread of linear commercial development along the County's arterials and by encouraging commercial activity in established community centers in a compact manner accessible to pedestrian traffic.

In view of these objectives, the adopted land use plan seeks to protect and enhance Bon Air's residential character, yet recognize that an attractive, commercial center catering to resident's needs is an important asset to the community. Specifically, the Adopted Plan seeks to enhance the commercial center around the intersection of Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue. The plan supports the conversion to business use of two residences which lie in the center core, the property located on the southeast corner of Bannon Road and Buford Road, and the property located on the northeast corner of Choctaw Road and Forest Hill Avenue. Both properties have diminished value as residences because business use is adjacent to both on two sides and both properties front on either Buford Road or Forest Hill Avenue. Office space accommodated on those lots would approximate 2,800 square feet assuming retention and modification of the existing structures. The impact of these two land use changes upon the community would be relatively minor. It is estimated that approximately 18 average daily trips (ADT) would be added to the existing roadways if conversion to business use occurs. The potential negative impact on adjacent residential areas could be mitigated through the Conditional Use Planned Development procedure. For example, conditions pertaining to the retention of the residential structures and to parking areas, landscaping, lighting and buffers

could be imposed.

Beyond these two properties, further conversion of existing residences to business use is not supported by the Adopted Plan. Opportunity for new businesses to locate within the Village Center does exist in vacant space at existing office complexes and at the SDT Office Park located further east on Forest Hill Avenue.

The Adopted Plan further recommends the creation of a neighborhood park on County-owned land adjacent to the Bon Air Elementary School and Jimmy Winters Creek, as well as the provision of pedestrian and bicycle features within the community and expansion of the Bon Air Branch Library.

The adopted land use Plan restricts development on all vacant land to the existing R-15 zoning requirements. This category requires a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet for subdivision development. Adhering to R-15 Zoning requirements would not preclude expansion of the Bon Air Branch Library site or creation of a neighborhood park adjacent of the Bon Air Elementary School location as these uses are permitted by right under R-15 zoning.

The configuration of the 4.2 acre tract on Forest Hill Avenue at Choctaw Road makes it highly unlikely that the property would be developed through the subdivision process, however, the property could be fully developed as now zoned by the creation of five frontage lots on Forest Hill Avenue. Subdivision approval would not be required as the Subdivision Ordinance allows the creation of road frontage lots provided each lot created subsequent to the first contains a minimum of 30,000 square feet in area and has 150 feet of road frontage. Depth of the property is sufficient to permit residential development with the required minimum front, side and rear yard setbacks as described in the Zoning Ordinance. It is estimated that such development would generate an additional 30 vehicle trips per day on Forest Hill Avenue.

In view of the shape and depth of the 7.5 acre tract further east on Forest Hill Avenue across from Thurloe Drive, full and proper development of the tract under R-15 zoning would require subdivision approval by the Planning Commission. Frontage development of the property as described above in connection with the 4.2 acre tract would preclude access to the rear, rendering the greater portion of the property unusable. The subdivision approval process could result in recommendations relative to buffers along Forest Hill Avenue, internal orientation of the lots, access from stub roads in

adjacent subdivision and any drainage improvements deemed necessary by the Environmental Engineering Department. Access from stub roads would require the acquisition of additional acreage. Such development would generate an estimated additional 186 vehicle trips per day on Forest Hill Avenue. Modifications to the existing utility system would not be necessary to support the development set forth in the adopted Plan.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

Implementation

The Bon Air Plan refines the goals and policies set forth in **General Plan 2000** to one central goal and six objectives. Each objective is accompanied by strategies and actions for implementation. The goal, objectives, strategies and actions are designed to serve as a policy framework for future decisions regarding Bon Air. In addition to the Plan's specific recommendations regarding land use, transportation and public facilities, the Plan also concludes that the County should improve pedestrian and bicycle access within the community. In the past, the installation of sidewalks, designation of bikelanes, and the timing of stoplights to permit pedestrian crossing have not been emphasized in the design of County road improvements. In reviewing the opportunities for the development of a cohesive residential community, the need for such facilities became apparent. Therefore, the Plan recommends that within established communities such as Bon Air, road improvements should include provision of features to facilitate non-vehicular movement.

GOAL: Enhancement of Bon Air's identity as an historic residential community.

OBJECTIVE 1: Enhance the quality of residential lifewithin Bon Air Village.

STRATEGY: Encourage development of remaining acreage in accordance with the recommended Alternative as described in the document.

- Zoning tools such as CUPD and subdivision approval procedures should be used by Planning staff wherever possible to insure compatibility and high quality development.
- Encourage diversified housing types to promote a greater choice in living situations for

Bon Air residents.

- Locate higher density residential near concentrations of services, business activity and public transit.

STRATEGY: Discourage conversion of existing residential structures for commercial and office use within residential neighborhoods and along major road corridors, except where such conversions are specifically identified in this plan.

- The Planning Department should use the Plan document and map to inform applicants of the principles for proposed development in Bon Air and in making its recommendations to the County Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and Board of Supervisors.

OBJECTIVE II: Provide an attractive commercial center on a scale appropriate to Bon Air Village and in a manner compatible with adjacent development.

STRATEGY: Promote new neighborhood serving commercial and office development within the Bon Air Village commercial center.

- Designate regional serving business areas outside the study area in the **Northern Area Land Use and Transportation Plan**.
- Development requests for office and commercial use that involve parcels located outside the Village Center should be discouraged.
- Retention of the residential structure and adaptive reuse for business activity of the property on the southeast corner of Bannon Road and Buford Road should occur through the Conditional Use Planned Development procedure.
- Retention of the residential structure and adaptive reuse for business activity of the property on the north corner of Choctaw Road and Forest Hill Avenue should occur through the Conditional Use Planned Development procedure.
- Land Use changes from public facility to business use within the Village Center should occur through the Conditional Use Planned Development procedure.

STRATEGY: Encourage present development to improve exterior appearance through such measures as storefront renovation and landscaped parking areas.

OBJECTIVE III: Maintain a safe and adequate transportation system within the Bon Air Community.

STRATEGY: Make transportation improvements needed to improve the level of service.

- Widening improvements to Forest Hill Avenue to include sidewalks should be programmed in the VDH&T's Six-Year planning process.
- Sidewalks along Buford Road should be studied for inclusion in the County's Capital Improvements Program.
- The County Transportation Department should request that VDH&T correct visibility restrictions on Buford Road and Rockaway Road.

STRATEGY: Improve traffic flow, alleviate intersection conflicts and enhance traffic safety within the Village center.

- The County Transportation Department should request that VDH&T check the timing at signalized intersections to see if improvements may be made.
- The County Transportation Department should request that VDH&T incorporate pedestrian actuation of the traffic signal at the intersection of Buford Road and Forest Hill Avenue.
- The County Planning and Transportation Departments should devise an improved access plan for village center businesses to be implemented through the site plan review process.

STRATEGY: Reduce the total number of through vehicle trips generated by residential development within the study area.

- The County should support the expansion of non-fixed route transit service such as spectran for elderly and handicapped Bon Air residents.
- The County should encourage ComPool to focus effort on the Bon Air community.

OBJECTIVE IV: Create the opportunity for safe, enjoyable pedestrian and bicycle travel throughout the Bon Air Community.

STRATEGY: Devise a comprehensive system of pedestrian features to be implemented as major road improvements are made.

- The County should identify existing pedestrian and bicycle travel patterns, document deficiencies, and program improvements through VDH&T funding.
- The County should determine the best pedestrian/bicycle route from subdivisions east of Forest Hill Avenue and south of the Southern Railroad tracks to the public facilities along McCrae Road and should program necessary improvements through VDH&T funding.
- The County should request that VDH&T roadway cross-section designs include sidewalks and street trees within the right of ways.

OBJECTIVE V: Provide public facilities in a manner consistent with service standards outlined in The Chesterfield Plan for Public Facilities.

STRATEGY: Identify and reserve sites through acquisition for needed public facility expansions.

- The County should identify and acquire land area sufficient for expansion of the Bon Air Branch Library.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation should explore the feasibility of using County-owned acreage adjacent to Bon Air Elementary School to develop a neighborhood park.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation should explore the feasibility of creating a system of hiking and bicycle trails which would link the Community Association, the public and private schools and the Bon Air Branch Library.

STRATEGY: Address currently existing drainage problems.

- The County should request that VDH&T provide and maintain adequate roadside ditches and culverts where the need exists.
- The County should initiate study and make recommendations regarding the drainage problems which exist on Buford Road and Logan Street.
- The Department of Environmental Engineering should continue to monitor the condition of Jimmy Winters Creek in Phase I; the implementation of Phase II drainage improvements should be given a high priority in

the Environmental Engineering Section of the Capital Improvements Program.

- The Department of Environmental Engineering should continue to monitor properties affected by the C.I.P. Bon Air Drainage Project; implement drainage improvements when warranted.

STRATEGY: Anticipate and plan for future public facility needs.

- Evaluate the desirability of extending County sewer to Bon Air Plat.
- Provide school facilities of a character identified in the **Chesterfield Plan for Public Facilities**; specifically projects included in the Bond Issue.

OBJECTIVE VI: Conserve the unique cultural and environmental assets within the community.

STRATEGY: Reinforce the historic aspects of Bon Air's identity.

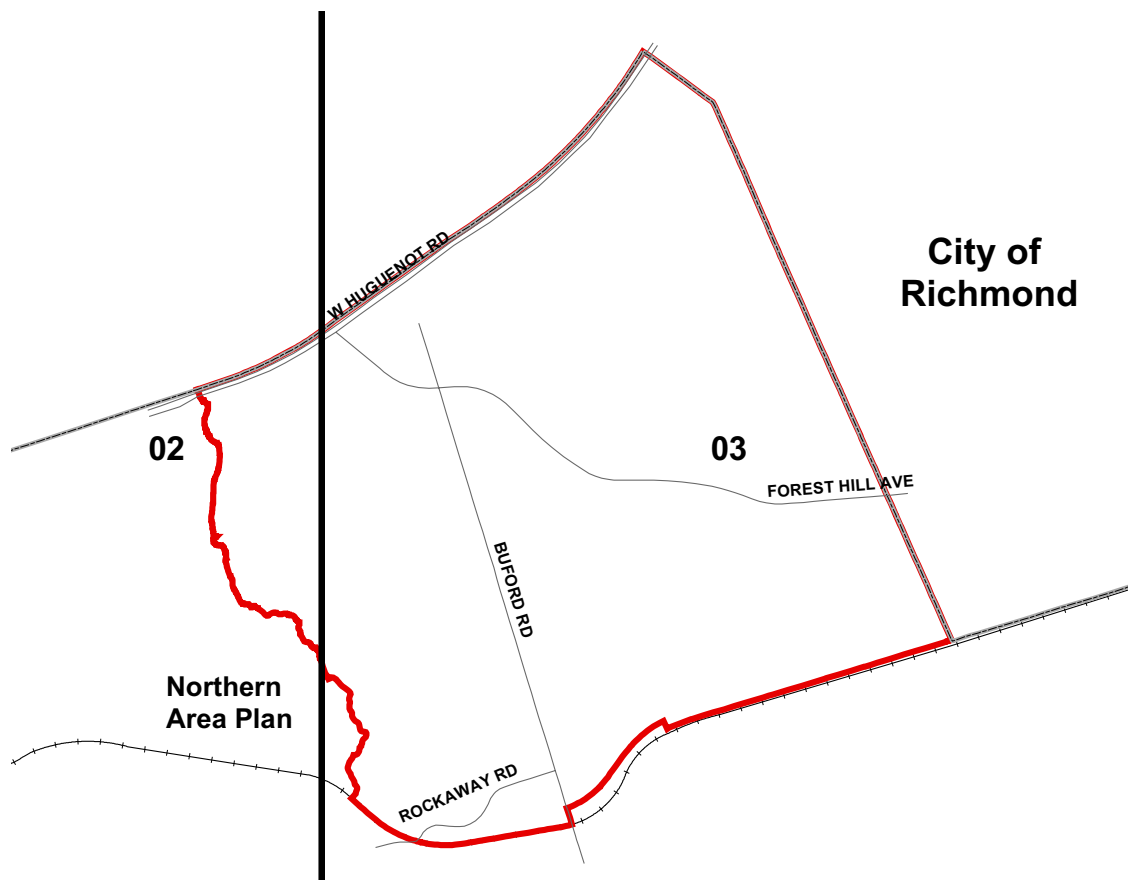
- Support commemorative activities sponsored by the Bon Air Historical Society and the designation of the "Old Bon Air Historic Area" as a Virginia Historic Landmark District.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation should coordinate with the Historic Society and interested citizens to create a neighborhood park at the school site with a character distinctive to Bon Air and reflective of its history.
- The Board of Supervisors should consider authorizing the Planning Commission to develop a general historic district designation amendment to the Zoning Ordinance designed to assure continued preservation of historically and architecturally significant structures in Bon Air.

STRATEGY: Ensure that the **Bon Air Plan** and the **Northern Area Plan** continue to accurately reflect the central community goal.

- Establish a regular procedure for review and revision of the **Northern Area Plan**.
- Make plan revisions, as needed, which reflect major changes that significantly affect the Bon Air Plan's recommendations.

The Bon Air Community Plan

In 2006, Chesterfield County Planning Department consolidated all individual land use plan maps in the *Plan For Chesterfield* into the county's Geographic Information System (GIS). The land use plan for The Bon Air Community Plan is now published in two forms: 1) as part of a countywide land use plan map, and 2) on land use plan grid map numbers 02,03



Copies of the Plan For Chesterfield countywide land use plan map and each of its more detailed 46 grid maps are available through the following sources:

- On the *Chesterfield County Planning Department* CD. This CD is included with paper copies of *The Plan for Chesterfield*, and also available separately from the Chesterfield County Planning Department.
- On Internet at <http://www.chesterfield.gov/plan>.

Questions Concerning the Plan For Chesterfield and its related land use plans should be directed to the Chesterfield County Planning Department at 804/748-1050 or planning@chesterfield.gov.

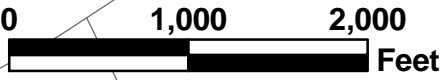
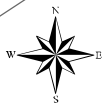
BON AIR COMMUNITY PLAN

Adopted by the Chesterfield County
Board of Supervisors
April 9, 1986

LAND USE PLAN

- GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- LIGHT COMMERCIAL
- OFFICE
- PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM/HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

CITY OF RICHMOND



02

03

REFER TO
NORTHERN AREA PLAN
See Plan for Legend

Prepared by Chesterfield County
Planning Department
October 2006

